

Written Testimony in support of the Job Service budget proposal - Billings

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The Billings Chamber of Commerce/CVB has over 1200 member businesses, and these businesses employ in excess of 44,000 employees. The Billings Job Service is one of our key partners in our area.

- Job Service is one of the four partners that includes the Billings Chamber, Big Sky EDA, and Billings City College in planning and implementing a Regional Workforce Development Forum to address employment issues both today as well as for the coming decade and beyond.
- Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) is a program designed to assist small businesses with 25 or fewer employees. This program was piloted 5 years ago in the Billings Job Service Region, was managed by the Billings Job Service staff and it was funded from the 21st Century Workforce funds by the Montana Department of labor and industry. The Billings Chamber and Big Sky Economic Development worked with the department to draft the IWT language and lobby this successfully through the legislature. This year the Billings Job Service assisted area employers with over \$100,000 in IWT training for existing small business employees. This impacted 58 area employers and 112 employees.
- Job Service impact on area employers
 - Billings Job Service hosted 85 different hiring events for area employers last year, serving more than 6000 Job Seekers.
 - As a specific example, the Job Service recently hosted a hiring event for The Northern Hotel, who were looking to fill 117 openings. They had 600 respondents at the event.
 - They also provide a variety of business services to area employers and specifically small businesses. This includes required employment posters, assistance with job descriptions, connecting them to other resources for wage and hour and human rights questions.
 - Billings Job Service has provided service to over 17,000 area employers.
- Job Service organizes the largest Job Fair in the state, Billings Jobs Jamboree, hosting dozens of local employers and thousands of area job seekers.
- Job Service responded with Rapid Response Services to several layoff events in the area over the past year, including Hostess Brands, Beall, and Associated Foods, Food Services of America, and many others. These services help those laid off understand unemployment insurance, potential training opportunities, and core services available to help them get back to work and on with their lives.
- In total, the Billings Job Service served close to 14,000 unique clients in 2012, providing nearly 112,000 services assisting job seekers with all things related to overcoming barriers to work and finding jobs.
- All of these services are provided free of charge.

The Billings Chamber of Commerce/CVB believes that the investment of money for Job Service is money well-spent.